CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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NOTE VERBALE DATED 14 MAY 1996 FROM THE PERMANENT MISSION OF ITALY ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARIAT OF THE CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT TRANSMITTING A DECLARATION CONCERNING THE NEGOTIATIONS ON THE COMPREHENSIVE NUCLEAR-TEST-BAN TREATY MADE ON 22 APRIL 1996 BY THE GENERAL AFFAIRS COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

The Italian Permanent Mission to the Conference on Disarmament presents its compliments to the Secretariat of the Conference on Disarmament and, on behalf of the Presidency of the European Union, has the honour to enclose herewith the text of a declaration - concerning the negotiations on the comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty - made on 22 April 1996 by the General Affairs Council of the European Union to which the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) countries members of the European Economic Area (EEA), the Central and Eastern European countries associated with the European Union and the associated countries Cyprus and Malta aligned themselves.

The Permanent Mission of Italy requests the Secretariat of the Conference on Disarmament to arrange for the enclosed statement to be circulated, as an official document of the Conference, among the members and non-members of the Conference.

Annex

DECLARATION BY THE EUROPEAN UNION ON THE COMPREHENSIVE NUCLEAR-TEST-BAN TREATY NEGOTIATIONS

The European Union attaches the highest priority and is strongly committed to the conclusion, before the end of the spring session of the Conference on Disarmament, of the negotiations on a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty that will prohibit any nuclear-weapon-test explosion or any other nuclear explosion, so as to enable its signature by autumn, at the outset of the fifty-first session of the General Assembly.

The European Union stresses the importance of ensuring that the treaty is universal and is internationally and effectively verifiable.

Such a treaty will be a concrete step in the full realization and effective implementation of article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. It will contribute to the prevention of the proliferation of nuclear weapons, to the process of nuclear disarmament and therefore to the enhancement of international peace and security.

The European Union welcomes and endorses the "zero yield" option supported by a large number of countries and calls on those countries that have not yet done so to subscribe to this position.

The European Free Trade Association countries members of the European Economic Area, the Central and Eastern European countries associated with the European Union and the associated countries, Cyprus and Malta, align themselves with the present declaration.